



NARRATIVES

Chapter 4 – The Persecution of Robert Crimo Jr.

Is This Justice or Merely a Preemptive Political Campaign?

AWAKE X /EONS
MAR 20, 2023

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It was barely three years ago that [former public defender] Eric Rinehart’s 2020 campaign for the next Illinois State’s Attorney was getting underway, punctuated with mission and vision statements about *tackling police misconduct, corruption in Illinois, reversing wrongful convictions*, and all while bolding touting himself as being the “*Champion the people of Lake County deserved.*”

It was also in 2020 that Rinehart established the Conviction Integrity Unit of which the goal, he said, was to “**get it right.**” The CIU’s integral purpose is investigation of claims of innocence and wrongful felony convictions in Lake County. The first sentence on the lcsao.org website stands alone and states clearly that, “**No one’s freedom should be unlawfully taken from them, period.**”

In addition to being a formidable breath of fresh air against corruption, Rinehart benefitted greatly from aligning himself with the Black Lives Matter movement at the height of the nationwide unrest during 2020. “I’m not afraid to say that Black Lives Matter,” he said.

The lip service, indeed, worked in his favor.

Just two years later, in the aftermath of the Fourth of July tragedy, the *Lake County People’s Champion* has ostensibly leaned so far in to his prosecutorial powers as State’s Attorney that, in what he likely assumed would be a 5d chess move toward perceived “justice,” the exploitative nature of his actions seems to be entirely lost upon him now.

The same man who once made his living as a criminal defense attorney, as a public defender, who championed against corruption, who vowed to be the voice who would speak truth to power, today, is all but unrecognizable. He has learned to fall in line.

And, after the the pressers have ended and the cameras have shut off, and we have read the grand jury indictment for ourselves, one has to ask themselves: *Is all of this for his own political career?*

What occurred on July 4th, 2022 was no doubt horrific and traumatic. Yet, just a month prior to the deadly Parade, fresh on the heels of the Uvalde tragedy, Illinois was claiming the strongest and strictest gun laws in the country. And, perhaps they were. Perhaps they are.

But, **who** was enforcing them?

At its core, the case against Robert Crimo Jr. is built upon loose assumptions of a man who followed the laws as they were written. After he was indicted, Rinehart confirmed during a press conference this very fact.

Crimo Jr. followed the law when applying for and sponsoring the FOID for his son, Crimo III. In order to formally charge Crimo Jr., Rinehart’s case alleges that Crimo Jr. possessed knowledge and foresight that made his involvement reckless endangerment, and that his knowledge and foresight far exceeded that of the Illinois State Police.

Rinehart’s claims vehemently assert that parents have infinitely more knowledge of their children’s activities than the police — generally. GENERALLY, this claim would be considered valid in the generalized context of a generalized parent-child relationship, and not the context of a legal adult - *aged nineteen* - who is entitled to their privacy as such, and their relationship with their father who, at the the time, was not living in the same household. Generally, that claim would have merit if, say, ISP had not been twice involved with that nineteen year old adult, who again, did not live in the same household as his father, yet did have a “clear and present danger” report filed on them by ISP just three months prior to the FOID application being filed. Generally, Rinehart’s statements shouldn’t strike fear into the hearts of parents everywhere if we are discussing actual children; not legal adult children.

As parents: do you know everything your teenager does? It’s doubtful. Do you know everything your legal adult child does? Are you still monitoring their devices when they are well into adulthood? Even more doubtful. But sure, sure.

We’ll pretend that we all exist within Rinehart’s entirely transparent world where secrets don’t exist, parents and children have completely open, honest relationships, and that ISP isn’t responsible when they drop the ball because there should never be a ball to drop and there should be no need for a State’s Attorney.

Crimo III was not only approved for the FOID - despite the police reports - despite the clear and present danger filing - but was able to pass **nine** background checks when purchasing weapons, **without** the assistance or presence of his father Crimo Jr., and all of these activities were well within the bounds of what was considered legal.

Both men followed the law.

Robert Crimo Jr. has been a well known figure within the Highland Park community for over thirty years. Even on the Fourth, as Bobby’s name was announced as a suspect, the emails and texts within the official Highland Park communication chain echoed

“Bob Crimo’s son” with a familiarity. Everyone knows and once loved Bob - the prominent business owner who once ran for mayor - who, prior to the Fourth, would have been a difficult individual to find anyone willing to utter an unkind word against.

Bob is a friendly, personable guy. He is easy to talk to. He never meets a stranger. And Bob, undoubtedly, loves and supports his son. He is a family man and a father, as so many of you are.

It is *easy* to play judge and jury and Monday morning quarterback after the fact and pass judgment against him. It is *easy* to point fingers and assume he missed something so obvious, or was somehow complicit, or should have known better. It is *easy to blame him*.

And, when your children make mistakes, and they will, you can only hope the entire world isn’t joined in a cacophony, dissecting your entire life history and doxing your private information ad-nauseam, highlighting every mistake you ever made on a national scale.

Indeed, there is an air of discontent surrounding the charges against Crimo Jr. and certainly, a larger conversation to be had.

Regardless of the fact that Robert Crimo III supposedly gave a willing confession to the shooting and waved his right to counsel - he also endured a **lengthy** psychiatric evaluation and spent a week in the rubber room after being arrested - clearly suggestive of a serious mental health crisis - He also later entered a NOT GUILTY plea and still is awaiting trial.

After Crimo Jr. was indicted, his attorney, George Gomez gave the following statement:

”On the eve of the statute of limitations for reckless conduct related to the sponsorship of Crimo III’s FOID application, the Lake County State’s County hastily made a decision to charge my client. This decision should alarm every single parent in the United States of America who, according to the Lake County State’s Attorney, knows exactly what is going on with their 19 year old adult children and can be held criminally liable for actions taken nearly three years later.”

There’s a lot to unpack here.

1. Crimo Jr. was indicted the day before the statute of limitations expired.
2. Crimo III, at the time Crimo Jr. was indicted, was **awaiting trial** after entering a not guilty plea.
3. According to the indictment, Robert Crimo III is already guilty and convicted of the shooting, therefore allowing the charges to be brought against Robert Crimo Jr.
4. The indictment does not say “allegedly” or “accused” - and Judge Strickland failed to use the words “allegedly” or “accused” during the February 16th court hearing, when reading the indictment to both Crimo Jr and Rinehart.
5. At no point does anyone mention the failure of ISP, of Highland Park police, or the systemic failure as a whole that allowed Robert Crimo III to slip through its strong and stringent cracks more than **ten** times.

The digital footprint of Crimo III that has been labeled so disturbing, so violent, so much of a red flag that it baffles armchair detectives how it could have been missed or ignored, yet many of Crimo III’s inner circle were oblivious to its existence, was swiftly erased from the internet on the Fourth as archivists raced to preserved it.

Crimo III’s social media had begun being wiped before he was apprehended, before his phone was located a day later, and before his electronics had been seized from his home.

How, then, did they know where to look so hastily? The Crimo III digital presence was a rabbit hole that was deep and ambiguous and not easily located. To find it, law enforcement had to know where to look. This theory became even more apparent when more search warrants were unsealed and mentioned only a “person A” as an “associate of” Crimo III.

Indeed, red flags were ignored time and time again. **But not by the family.**

The Illinois gun laws may have been the 8th strictest in the nation at the time. The Crimos followed those laws and a tragedy still unfolded.

The people’s champion of Lake County, avenger of injustice and corruption and police misconduct, is now standing at the precipice of perhaps the largest systemic failure his office will ever see.

Rather than addressing the failure head-on that led to such a catastrophic tragedy, those in the highest government positions received awards, medals, pats on the back, and emails of praise and congratulations.

The prosecution began at the bottom; not with those who were lackadaisical in their responsibilities.

Not those who received paychecks and benefits to enforce the laws and were derelict in their duties.

Not with those who allowed the system to fail.

Not with those who refuse to admit their part.

But, with a 21 year old who admitted to the Highland Park police, outside the presence of his father, that he was a depressed drug user, and was still permitted by the state to legally purchase an arsenal.

And with his father, who followed the law, who despite Rinehart’s insistence that all parents everywhere should know their children’s online and offline behavior inside and out even when they are well into adulthood and entitled to their own privacy and lack of parental scrutiny, was by all accounts nowhere near as aware of the dangers that lay ahead as he needs you to believe, in order to prosecute his case and secure his next election.

This isn’t championing for the people. This is the diametrical opposite of everything Rinehart portrayed himself as, claimed to believe, and promised he would be.

To seek true justice, to seek true change, the path forward shouldn’t be paved by publicly executing a citizen who simply followed a law that was already broken, and laws tenuously enforced by those who are paid to serve and protect us.

The path forward is to do exactly what Eric Rinehart said in his original campaign vision he would do: **Hold the SYSTEM accountable.**

J.B. is a registered nurse, mental health advocate, and investigative journalist who has been independently researching and reporting on the case against the Crimo family since July 4th, 2022.

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






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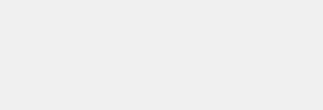
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